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dextran in lieu of dextran, and in carboxymethylating the dextran, providing an extent of carboxymethylation sufficient to produce an edematous response, to the derivatized composition, that is decreased in comparison to that resulting from utilizing a dextran that has not been thus derivatized.

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45. (twice amended) A method according to claim 41 of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the type including a polysaccharide-derived iron oxide MRI contrast agent wherein there is a risk of edematous response, wherein the improvement comprises administering to the subject an effective dose of the contrast agent to obtain magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of a tissue or organ so that there is a decreased edematous response in comparison to utilizing an unmodified polysaccharide contrast agent.

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57. (once amended) An improved method of the type for obtaining a composition for pharmacological use from a polysaccharide wherein there is a risk of edematous response, wherein the improvement comprises: reducing and carboxyalkylating the polysaccharide, and, in carboxyalkylating the polysaccharide, providing an extent of carboxyalkylation sufficient to produce an edematous response, to the obtained carboxyalkylated composition, that is decreased in comparison to that resulting from a method for providing a composition for pharmacological use obtained from an unmodified polysaccharide.

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59. (once amended) An improved method of the type for obtaining a composition for pharmacological use from a dextran, wherein the improvement comprises: reducing and carboxymethylating the dextran, and, in carboxymethylating the dextran, providing an extent of carboxymethylation sufficient to produce an edematous response, to the obtained carboxymethylated composition, that is decreased in comparison to the response